

# The Stieglitz Circle



"The Stieglitz Circle" was organized by Amy Mizrahi Zorn, branch director, Whitney Museum of American Art, Downtown at Federal Reserve Plaza. Special thanks are extended to Gioia Whittemore Frelinghuysen, manager, for administrative support and to Ellen Small and Stuart Steck for research assistance.

### **Exhibition Itinerary**

Whitney Museum of American Art, Downtown at Federal Reserve Plaza

February 26–May 1, 1992

Whitney Museum of American Art at Champion

June 26–August 26, 1992

"Paul Strand," a retrospective exhibition of work by the acclaimed photographer from "The Stieglitz Circle," is on view at the Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Avenue, March 13–May 17, 1992.

Cover: Alvin Langdon Coburn, *The Octopus*, New York, 1912

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945 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10021

## Painting and Photography of the Stieglitz Circle

**A**lfred Stieglitz (1864–1946) was the driving force behind the development and acceptance of vanguard art and photography in the United States. More than a decade before the 1913 Armory Show introduced European and American modernism to the public, he was actively providing a forum for the discussion and exhibition of the latest ideas in art and photography. When Stieglitz began publishing the quarterly journal *Camera Work* in 1902, controversy was already raging over whether photography was a suitable medium of artistic expression. *Camera Work* began principally as the organ of the Photo-Secession, a group of pictorial photographers founded by Stieglitz, also in 1902. In their effort to raise the status of photography, the pictorialists created photographs that imitated the soft-focus, overly composed subjects of Symbolist painting. They also manipulated the photographic print, applying brushstrokes, tints, and chemical washes, thereby adding the hand of the artist to the product of the machine.

*Camera Work* contained articles and reviews on photography and modern art by Waldo Frank, Paul Rosenfeld, Gertrude Stein, and the Mexican writer and caricaturist Marius de Zayas, as well as photo-gravures of extremely high quality, printed on Japan tissue from original negatives. The printing was frequently supervised by the



Frank Eugene, *Dr. Emanuel Lasker and His Brother*, 1907



Alfred Stieglitz, *The Steerage*, 1907

artist, and the photogravures were tipped in by hand, often by Stieglitz himself.

By 1910, however, Stieglitz began to steer *Camera Work* away from pictorialism and toward the emerging modernist aesthetic and so-called straight photography. This kind of photography did not strive for painterly effects, but rather accepted the limitations of the medium, defining itself, as modernist painting was doing, in terms of the qualities that made it unique. Not surprisingly, it was also around this time that issues of *Camera Work* began to include reproductions of paintings and sculpture by Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Constantin Brancusi, Auguste Rodin, and the Americans John Marin and Abraham Walkowitz.

*Camera Work* was by then also reproducing early modernist photographs by J. Craig Annan, Alvin Langdon Coburn, Baron Adolf de Meyer, Frank Eugene, Paul B. Haviland, Karl Struss, and Clarence H. White, among others. Their work shares a modern idiom — a flattening of the picture space, close cropping of subjects, and emphasis on abstract patterns. Bold geometric compositions prevail, as in Eugene's *Dr. Emanuel Lasker and His Brother* (1907), where abstract motifs are formed by chessboards both on the wall and on the table, as well as by stark white collars, cuffs, and a cigarette seen against the black mass of the subjects' coats. Haviland, heir to a porcelain manufacturing company, financial backer and adviser to Stieglitz, and an amateur photographer, emphasized abstract, blocky shapes and the lines of the ship's deck and rails in *Passing Steamer* (1912). A similar aesthetic formalism controls Struss' *On the East River, New York* (1912). De Meyer's quickly composed photographs of street scenes and people, such as *The Balloon Man* (1912), influenced the young student Paul Strand. Stieglitz's own photographic vision was by this time also intent on form and rhythm. In "How *The Steerage* Happened," Stieglitz described the genesis of one of his most famous photographs, taken in 1907 and reproduced in *Camera Work* in 1911. While on a cruise, he became fascinated with the crowd in the steerage: "I saw shapes related to each other. I saw a picture of shapes and underlying that of the feeling I had about life."

It was not only through the pages of *Camera Work* that Stieglitz promoted modern art and photography. In 1905, with his close friend, painter and photographer Edward Steichen, he opened The Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession. For two years, this small, three-room gallery exclusively exhibited photography by members of the Photo-Secession. By 1908 the gallery had moved across the hall and was renamed 291, after its address on Fifth Avenue. Photography ceased to be its primary concern, priority being given now to exhibitions of European and American modernists, often selected and organized by



Edward Steichen, who was living in Paris. Works by Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso, Rodin, and Rousseau were first seen in this country in Stieglitz's gallery. Among the Americans, Oscar Bluemner, Arthur B. Carles, Arthur G. Dove, Marsden Hartley, Stanton Macdonald-Wright, John Marin, Alfred Maurer, Georgia O'Keeffe, Abraham Walkowitz, and Max Weber all had their first one-artist exhibitions at The Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession, 291, or one of Stieglitz's later establishments — The Intimate Gallery (1925–29) and An American Place (1929–34). In addition, 291 became a meeting place where artists, critics, writers, and other intellectuals discussed current trends in art. An inner circle, dubbed the “Round Table,” met weekly over lunch at a neighborhood restaurant where Stieglitz inevitably pontificated — and picked up the bill.

The photographs Stieglitz took after *The Steerage* confirm his dedication to raising photography from an imitative to an innovative art. His concern for the formal quality of the image parallels that of the avant-garde painters whose work he showed at 291 and from whom he learned a great deal. Portraits such as *Paul B. Haviland* (c. 1910) emphasize shape and relationships between light and dark. Stieglitz's “portraits” of New York City buildings, photographed throughout his career from the back window of 291, The Intimate Gallery, An American Place, and his hotel apartment at the Shelton, became icons of modernity through their sharp focus, dramatic, natural lighting, and unconventional vantage points.



Paul Strand,  
*New York (Wall Street)*, 1915



Alfred Stieglitz, *Equivalent* – 1925, 1925

Stieglitz's vision of the city served as the touchstone for later photographers as well as painters who sought to learn from, yet transcend, the master's example. Paul Strand's famous *New York (Wall Street)* (1915) combines a strong formal composition of small, rhythmic shapes against imposing verticals to create a powerful psychological statement of modern life, illustrating humankind's insignificance in the shadow of its self-created monuments. Edward Steichen's representation of the quiet majesty of skyscrapers in *Fortieth Street, New York* (1925) is indebted to Stieglitz's city views, as are the photographs of New York by Alvin Langdon Coburn, Morton L. Schamberg, and Charles Sheeler. Painters, too, responded to the energy and modernity of the city, from Charles Demuth's Precisionist works that immortalize stoic industrial structures and John Marin's syncopated etchings and watercolors of landmark city buildings to the disturbing perspective of Georgia O'Keeffe's New York paintings and the compressed space of Abraham Walkowitz's city scenes.

Stieglitz's early relationship with Steichen was one of both mentor and collaborator. Steichen not only designed the graphics for *Camera Work* and the interior decor of 291, but scouted for artists and arranged exhibitions while pursuing his own work as a painter and photographer. His photographs were shown at 291 and frequently reproduced in *Camera Work*. By about 1915, he had abandoned the pictorial style. Under Stieglitz's influence, even a photograph with an ostensibly romantic subject such as *Untitled (Dying Sunflower)* is rendered so as to emphasize line and shape through its composition and sharp focus.

In 1922 Steichen burned his paintings and dedicated himself to horticulture and photography, cross-breeding flowers and photographing his garden. He became the chief photographer for *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* the following year and also made advertising photographs for the J. Walter Thompson agency. In fashion photographs such as *La Duchesse de Gramont* (1924) and advertisements such as *Lighters* (1928), Steichen manipulated lighting and composition to create artistically innovative images that were also commercially successful.

Another photographer influenced by Stieglitz was Alvin Langdon Coburn. One of the most advanced photographers of the Photo-Secession, he exhibited regularly in group shows at 291 and his photographs were often featured in *Camera Work*. For Coburn around 1910, the imposing skyscrapers, suspension bridges, and other engineering feats of New York inspired a "burning desire to record, translate, create...these visions...before they fade." Photographs such as *The Octopus, New York* (1912) express the spirit of the city, its chaotic streets and dizzying vistas. Even familiar paths and the shadows of its well-known buildings become strangely abstract in Coburn's vision.

Later in his career, Coburn produced a series he called Vortographs, which present a world of prisms, abstracted shapes, and flashes of light; all reference to the material world has vanished. Perhaps Coburn's "pure" abstractions inspired Stieglitz's photographs of clouds, which he began to make in 1922 and entitled *Equivalents*. There is no reference in these images to time or place, no way to determine the orientation. The camera has captured ephemeral forms that dissolve into an abstraction which represents the photographer's state of mind.

The abstract character of photographs produced by Stieglitz and his circle was matched in the American paintings Stieglitz exhibited at 291, beginning in 1909 with a joint exhibition of the work of Alfred Maurer and John Marin. Both men had been studying art in Paris. Maurer, under the influence of Matisse, began painting in a Fauvist style with bold color and decorative emphasis, as in *Still Life*. Matisse's work was already known in America, thanks to Edward Steichen, who had met the French artist in Paris and introduced his work to Stieglitz. The result was a Matisse exhibition at 291 in 1908 and work featured in *Camera Work* in 1912.

John Marin's understanding and appreciation for contemporary European art grew as he became an integral part of Stieglitz's circle. His early graphic works, such as *Brooklyn Bridge* (1911) and *The Woolworth Building State II* (1913) express the movement, noise, and energy of the city. Marin's desire to capture the urban pulse was as enthusiastic as Coburn's: "I see great forces at work, great movements; the large buildings and the small buildings, the warring of the great and the small; influences of one mass on another greater or smaller mass.... I try to express graphically what a great city is doing. Within the frames there must be a balance, a controlling of these warring, pushing, pulling forces. That is what I am trying to realize."

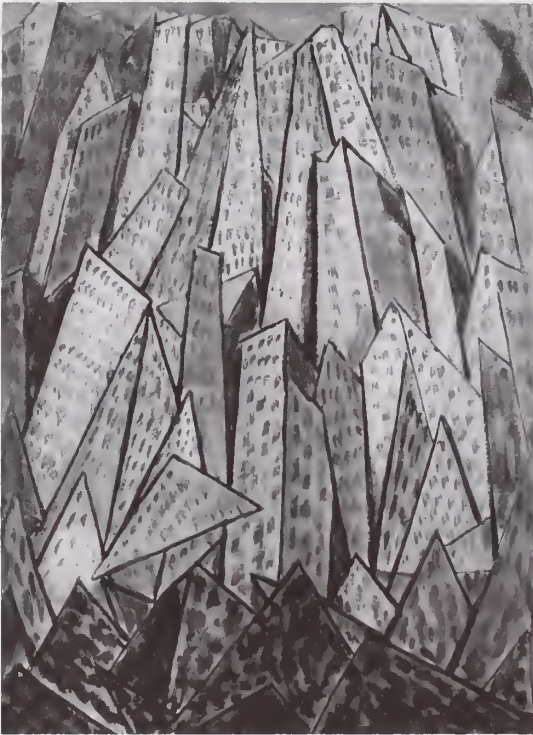
Beginning in 1914, the landscape of Maine inspired Marin to create spare, calligraphic watercolors of the coast and woodlands. Works such as *Deer Isle, Maine* (1923) and *White Horses — Sea Movement Off Deer Isle, Maine* (1926) show Marin's debt to Cubism in their irregular planes, daubs of color, and geometric lines while revealing the artist's unsurpassed mastery of watercolor.

Marsden Hartley was the next American to be given an exhibition at 291, also in 1909. Three years later, Stieglitz found a benefactor who sponsored an extended trip to Europe for Hartley. Hartley's paintings from these years, such as *Painting, Number 5* (1914–15), are heavily influenced by the vanguard German Expressionist art he found in Munich and Berlin, but they also incorporate German military insignia and motifs. Hartley returned to America in 1916 and from 1918 through the 1920s concentrated on pastels and paintings of the New Mexico



John Marin, *Brooklyn Bridge*, 1911





Abraham Walkowitz, *Cityscape*, c. 1915

landscape, a subject that would later become seminal to John Marin, Paul Strand, and Georgia O'Keeffe.

In 1910 Stieglitz mounted an important group exhibition, "Younger American Painters," from which several important artists emerged. Arthur B. Carles, like Alfred Maurer, was deeply influenced by Matisse, with whom he studied in Paris between 1905 and 1907. As late as the 1930s Carles' paintings were still exhibiting a strong debt to the Fauves, as is evident in *Bouquet Abstraction* (c. 1930).

Arthur G. Dove, who had met Stieglitz through Maurer, also exhibited in "Younger American Painters." His early style, derived from Fauvism, was based on the abstraction of organic forms, as in *Abstraction, Number 2* (c. 1911) and *Plant Forms* (1915). The former was shown at 291 in 1912 in an exhibition that received much public attention. Strangely familiar yet unreadable as particular, nameable things, Dove's abstract forms are comparable to Strand's contemporaneous photographs, where the angle of the camera, grouping of objects, or cropping and telescopic effects transform the commonplace.

Another artist included in "Younger American Painters" was Max Weber, to whom Stieglitz gave a one-artist show the following year. The Russian-born Weber had lived in Europe since 1905 and was introduced to Stieglitz by Steichen. Personally acquainted with Picasso, Robert Delaunay, and Matisse, Weber helped Steichen educate Stieglitz about avant-garde art and even organized an exhibition of the paintings of Henri Rousseau at 291. Returning to New York in 1909 with an intimate knowledge of European modernism, he became for two years an omnipresent and influential figure at 291, arranging exhibitions, participating in daily gallery business, and, when he was destitute, living in the back room of the gallery. Weber's appreciation of Cubism was especially profound, and he infused his art with its tenets. His 1917 woodcuts of figures with disjointed bodies in a compressed space show a combination of the influences of Cubism and African sculpture. It was such translations of Cubism as these that made the style accessible to American painters and photographers.

The New York-born artist Man Ray began frequenting 291 in 1911 and was particularly impressed with the Cubist works of Picasso and the Cézanne watercolors exhibited there that year. He soon became an intimate at the gallery and began painting in a Cubist idiom derived from Cézanne, Picasso, and Weber. In *Five Figures* (1914), the geometric bodies of the abstracted figures crowd the picture surface, and paint is applied in dashlike daubs, as in Cézanne's proto-Cubist paintings and watercolors. While he is better known for his later, innovative Surrealist photographs, Man Ray continued to paint throughout his career.



In 1912 Stieglitz held exhibitions of works by Carles, Dove, and Abraham Walkowitz, a new-comer introduced to Stieglitz by Hartley. Walkowitz, too, had studied in Europe, where he was influenced by Cézanne, Rodin, and Matisse as well as Weber, with whom he lived briefly in New York. Walkowitz's *Cityscape* (c. 1915), with its jagged buildings and claustrophobic space, and the energetic watercolor *New York* (1917) are, like Coburn's photographs and Marin's etchings, elegies to the teeming energy and rhythms of the city.

Walkowitz was praised for the sincerity of his work in a 1914 essay in *Camera Work* by the painter Oscar Bluemner. Bluemner had begun to frequent 291 about 1908. After a seven-month sojourn abroad in 1912, he was painting in a style based on Cubism and a prismatic use of color. In 1915 he had his first one-artist exhibition at 291. The following year he moved to New Jersey and started producing views of the local sites and of New York City that emphasized the tonal coherence of the picture — working, as he put it, “at all parts and corners simultaneously, in order to balance tone, color, mass, and cause the outlines to fix this expression and harmony.” In *Space Motive, a New Jersey Valley* (c. 1917–18), Bluemner used complementary colors to unify the painting. His transformation of the landscape through color harmonies resulted in what he described as “the general conception of the original motifs, but at the same time a realization of the personal feeling and an objectification of the abstract idea of the beautiful.”



Oscar Bluemner,  
*Space Motive, a New Jersey Valley*, c. 1917–18



Stanton Macdonald-Wright,  
"Conception." *Synchromy*, 1915

Stanton Macdonald-Wright was another of Stieglitz's artists profoundly interested in color theory, in his case initially inspired by Cézanne. Around 1912, he and fellow painter Morgan Russell developed a theory of color in painting which they called Synchromism. Macdonald-Wright explained the theory in a statement written on the occasion of his one-artist exhibition at 291 in 1916: the "visualization of abstract forces solely by the juxtaposing of colors....I tend to establish in my painting, in contrast to other painting, the relation which now exists between music and its polyphonic development. Illustrative music is a thing of the past....Painting certainly need not lag behind music." Both "*Conception.*" *Synchromy* (1915) and "*Oriental.*" *Synchromy in Blue-Green* (1918) are strong examples of Macdonald-Wright's mature Synchromist paintings. In each painting fragmented human forms that reveal his debt to Cubism are woven into a system of color harmonies.

The color theories and paintings of Macdonald-Wright and Bluenner were studied carefully by Georgia O'Keeffe. O'Keeffe was introduced to Stieglitz and 291 while taking classes at the Art Students League in 1907–08; in 1924 they were married. Stieglitz exhibited O'Keeffe's organic abstraction drawings in 1916, along with works by Charles Duncan and René Lafferty. Such works as *Drawing No. 8* (1915) are reminiscent of Dove's contemporaneous abstractions. The following year, Stieglitz gave O'Keeffe a one-artist show that opened immediately after a Macdonald-Wright exhibition. Subtle color harmonies continued to be crucial to O'Keeffe's work, as in *Flower Abstraction* (1924) and *Abstraction* (1926). These two paintings present views of the inner petals of flowers magnified to almost unrecognizable abstraction; yet they remain hauntingly familiar. The close-up effect and attention to detail in O'Keeffe's flower paintings reveal a debt as well to modern photography — to Steichen's sharply focused and tightly cropped photographs of flowers and Strand's *Bowls* (1916), a print of which he had sent to O'Keeffe. With its compressed space and abstracting of shapes, *Bowls*, like some of O'Keeffe's paintings, transforms the commonplace into the exotic.

Stieglitz hired the young painter-photographer Charles Sheeler to photograph the 1917 installation of O'Keeffe's work. Sheeler and Morton L. Schamberg, his classmate from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, had turned to photography about 1910, initially as a way to generate income since their paintings were not selling. The two men shared a studio and also rented a small house in the country near Doylestown in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Schamberg was an especially inventive portrait photographer — for his 1912 *Self-Portrait* he photographed his own reflection. He also photographed New York City from unusual heights and angles, as in *Untitled (City Courtyards)*



Paul Strand, *Photograph (Bowls)*, 1916

(1916), which recalls the photographs Stieglitz took from the back window of 291.

Both Schamberg and Sheeler were influenced by the Dadaist work of Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia. These European artists, who arrived in the United States in 1915, together established the New York wing of Dada. Schamberg, Sheeler, Demuth, Man Ray, and other American vanguard artists, writers, and performers exchanged ideas with the Dadaists at the informal salons held at the New York home of Louise and Walter Arensberg. Dada's anti-art ideas and its elevation of machines as an appropriate theme for high art were also promoted by Stieglitz, who had given Picabia two shows at 291 and reproduced his pieces in *Camera Work*. Dada ideas were also circulated by Picabia and Marius de Zayas in their satirical journal 291. The machine imagery that appears in Schamberg's *Untitled (Mechanical Abstraction)* (1916) thus owes a debt to the Dadaists' efforts to invert standard notions of art and appropriate subject matter.

Sheeler's career as a photographer began with commissions to document collectors' homes and art collections. Sheeler sent a number of these early photographs to Stieglitz, who was so impressed that he wanted to include some of them, along with reproductions of paintings by O'Keeffe, in the summer 1917 issue of *Camera Work*. For financial reasons, however, *Camera Work* ceased publication before this issue was printed. In 1917 Sheeler's photography was exhibited in "Photographs by Sheeler, Strand, and Schamberg," organized by de Zayas at his Modern Gallery; in December of that year de Zayas mounted a show of Sheeler's photographs of the weathered barn, house, and interior at Doylestown. *Doylestown House — Stairs from Below* (1917), one of Sheeler's most successful Bucks County images, recalls Coburn's *Vortograph* in its abstraction of shapes and confusing perspective.

Man Ray ventured into photography when he began taking pictures to document his own work. His interest in the medium as an expressive form was encouraged by his friend Duchamp, and by the early 1920s he was producing his famous Rayographs, such as *Metal Laboratory Objects* (1922) and *Contrasted Circular Forms with Pair of Optical Black Dots* (1923). The Rayographs, in which actual objects are placed on photographic paper and then exposed to light, were experiments in the creation of a flattened picture space and abstract patterns. In other photographs, such as *Untitled (Walnut and Lighter)* (1929), Man Ray created bizarre still lifes through unusual juxtapositions that recall the advertising images of Steichen and the flower paintings of O'Keeffe and Demuth.



Morton L. Schamberg, *Untitled (City Courtyards)*, 1916





Alfred Maurer, *Still Life*, n.d.



Georgia O'Keeffe, *Single Lily with Red*, 1928



Man Ray, *Contrasted Circular Forms with Pair of Optical Black Dots*, 1923

Early in his career, Charles Demuth, a painter from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, produced meticulously executed watercolors of flowers. His technique — carefully controlling pools of color within delicate pencil outlines — is similar to the Rodin watercolors he could have seen at 291 or in reproductions in *Camera Work*. Around 1916, with the encouragement of Hartley, Demuth began experimenting with a new style of painting, highly influenced by Cézanne and the Cubists, which would come to be called Precisionism. Sheeler, too, adopted this style. In Demuth's mature Precisionist paintings such as *My Egypt* (1927), humble architectural forms are flattened into faceted shapes of Cubism and imbued with a monumentality and presence comparable to the pyramids of Egypt.

A similar elevation of the mundane to the majestic characterizes Strand's *Apartment House* (1920). A generic, uninspired building attains a heroic quality through strong contrasts of black and white, horizontal and vertical. Strand's photographs had been featured in 1916 and 1917 issues of *Camera Work* and praised by Stieglitz as "brutally direct. Devoid of all flim-flam; devoid of any trickery and of any 'ism'; devoid of any attempt to mystify an ignorant public, including the photographers themselves. These photographs are the direct expression of today."

Strand had been taken to Stieglitz's Photo-Secession Galleries as a high school student in 1907 by his teacher, photographer Lewis W. Hine. Around 1915, encouraged by Stieglitz, he abandoned soft-focus pictorialism for straight photography. His photographs reproduced in *Camera Work*, such as *New York (Wall Street)* (1915) and *Bowls* (1916), show his interest in creating a modern idiom for photography, one not imitative of the other arts yet, like the most advanced painting of the day, stressing geometric design and a flattened picture plane.

This modernist view of art was one which the artists in Stieglitz's circle shared. As Strand explained, he, Stieglitz, and the others at 291 "all talked the same language." Indeed, Strand's close-up photograph of bowls was one of several photographs from 1915–17 in which he attempted to come to terms with the Cubism of Picasso — to understand "the underlying principles behind Picasso and the others in their organization of the picture's space, of their unity of what that organization contained, and the problem of making a two-dimensional area have a three-dimensional character." In *New York (Wall Street)* Strand's aims were similar to those of the Italian Futurists: "One of the elements I wanted to work with then was people moving in the street. I wanted to see if I could organize a picture of that kind of movement in a way that was abstract and controlled....I was fascinated watching people walk by those huge, rectangular, rather sinister windows —





Edward Steichen, *La Duchesse de Gramont*, 1924

blind shapes, actually, because it was hard to see in — and one day I went and stood on the steps of the Subtreasury Building and made a photograph trying to pull all that together.”

Strand was also inspired by the abstractions of natural forms in O’Keeffe’s paintings, which find their counterpart in the photograph *Driftwood, Dark Roots, Maine* (1928). And the machine aesthetic of the Dadaists, adopted by Schamberg in his paintings, may underlie Strand’s *Drilling Machine* (1923). Of course Strand was also influenced by the work of his fellow photographers. Stieglitz’s and Coburn’s photographs of New York inspired both Strand and Sheeler, who collaborated in 1920 on a film entitled *Manhatta*, featuring bizarre perspectives and dramatic angles of New York buildings and streets. In the press release for this 6 1/2-minute film, Strand described the artists’ intention: “to register directly the living forms...through the most rigid selection, volumes, lines, and masses, to their intensest terms of expressiveness.” Indeed, it was this desire to capture the essence of natural and man-made structures through formal means that united the painters and photographers of the Stieglitz circle and made the dialogue between the two arts crucial and inspirational.

It was Stieglitz who generated this dialogue. As Strand noted, he often described “ ‘291’ as a laboratory, a place to evaluate the quality of the pictures and of people’s reactions to them.” Not surprisingly, Stieglitz detested being called a dealer, resisted the commodification of art, and refused to sell work to anyone he deemed unworthy. Marius de Zayas wrote that his caricatures of Stieglitz “expressed my understanding of Stieglitz’s mission; to catch souls and to be the midwife who brings out new ideas to the world.” It is Stieglitz’s unique achievement to have done just this while also producing some of the most advanced and innovative photographs of his era. From his earliest days as a member of the Camera Club of New York until his death in 1946, Stieglitz, with his eloquent speech and charismatic personality, was a major force in shaping the future not only of American photography but of painting as well.

Stieglitz inspired others to open galleries of modern art and publish journals devoted to avant-garde movements. The Anderson Galleries, with Stieglitz’s aid, mounted the important Forum Exhibition of 1916, where two hundred works by thirty-three American artists were shown in an effort to “correct” the relative paucity of American art at the 1913 Armory Show. In 1917 Agnes Ernst Meyer, a friend of Stieglitz and avid collector and patron of European and American modern art, along with Marius de Zayas and Picabia, opened the Modern Gallery as a commercial alternative to 291. Other galleries of contemporary art that

opened in the mid-teens — such as Montross, Macbeth, Weyhe, and Washington Square — provided competition but also lent credence to Stieglitz's early support of the American moderns. In 1922 Paul Rosenfeld and Herbert Seligmann, supported by Stieglitz, began *MSS*, a literary journal that published articles by a diverse group of critics, artists, and poets. Strand edited the fourth issue, whose subject was "Can a Photograph Have the Significance of Art?" — a question which, by 1922, could be answered with a resounding "yes." This elevation of photography to an art form equivalent to painting cannot be imagined without the achievements of Alfred Stieglitz.

Amy Mizrahi Zorn



Paul Strand, *Driftwood, Dark Roots, Maine*, 1928



## Works in the Exhibition

Unless otherwise indicated, all works are from the Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Dimensions are in inches; height precedes width. Sight refers to measurements taken within the frame or mat opening. Photographs exhibited on pages of *Camera Work* were reproduced as photogravures; the dimensions are not those of the original photograph.

### J. Craig Annan (1829–1887)

*The White House*, n.d., as published in  
*Camera Work*, October 1910  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts;  
Gift of Julia Marshall

### Oscar Bluemner (1867–1938)

*Space Motive, a New Jersey Valley*, c. 1917–18  
Oil on canvas, 30 1/2 x 40 1/2  
Purchase, with funds from Mrs. Muriel  
D. Palitz 78.2

*A Situation in Yellow*, 1933  
Oil on canvas, 36 x 50 1/2  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Koenigsberg 67.66  
(Champion only)

### Arthur B. Carles (1882–1952)

*Bouquet Abstraction*, c. 1930  
Oil on canvas, 31 3/4 x 36  
Purchase 53.41

### Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882–1966)

*The Coal Cart, New York*, 1911  
Gelatin silver print, 15 5/8 x 12  
International Museum of Photography  
at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York

*The Octopus, New York*, 1912  
Gelatin silver print, 12 3/16 x 9 1/8  
International Museum of Photography  
at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York

*Vortograph*, 1917  
Gelatin silver print, 8 1/4 x 6 1/4 (sight)  
Collection of Peter C. Bunnell

*Vortograph*, 1917  
Gelatin silver print, 8 1/4 x 6 1/4 (sight)  
Collection of Peter C. Bunnell

### Baron Adolf de Meyer (1868–1946)

*The Balloon Man*, 1912, as published in  
*Camera Work*, October 1912  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts;  
Gift of Julia Marshall

### Charles Demuth (1883–1935)

*Daisies*, 1918  
Watercolor on paper, 17 1/4 x 11 3/8 (sight)  
Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.423

*August Lilies*, 1921  
Watercolor on paper, 11 3/4 x 17 7/8  
Purchase 31.422  
(Downtown only)

*My Egypt*, 1927  
Oil on composition board, 35 3/4 x 30  
Purchase, with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt  
Whitney 31.172

*Buildings, Lancaster*, 1930  
Oil on composition board, 24 x 20  
Gift of anonymous donor 58.63  
(Champion only)

### Arthur G. Dove (1880–1946)

*Abstraction, Number 2*, c. 1911  
Charcoal on paper, 20 5/8 x 17 1/2 (sight)  
Purchase 61.50

*Plant Forms*, 1915  
Pastel on canvas, 17 1/4 x 23 7/8 (sight)  
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Roy  
R. Neuberger 51.20

*Distraction*, 1929

Oil on canvas, 21 x 30

Gift of an anonymous donor 58.64  
(Champion only)

**Frank Eugene (1865–1936)**

*Dr. Emanuel Lasker and His Brother*, 1907,  
as published in *Camera Work*, July 1910  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts;  
Gift of Julia Marshall

**Marsden Hartley (1877–1943)**

*Painting, Number 5*, 1914–15

Oil on canvas, 39 1/2 x 31 3/4

Gift of an anonymous donor 58.65

*Landscape, New Mexico*, 1919–20

Oil on canvas, 28 x 36

Purchase, with funds from Francis  
and Sydney Lewis 77.23  
(Downtown only)

**Paul B. Haviland (1880–1950)**

*Passing Steamer*, 1912, as published in  
*Camera Work*, July, 1912  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts;  
Gift of Julia Marshall

**Stanton Macdonald-Wright (1890–1973)**

*"Conception." Synchromy*, 1915

Oil on canvas, 30 x 24

Gift of George F. Of 52.40

*"Oriental." Synchromy in Blue-Green*, 1918

Oil on canvas, 36 x 50

Purchase 52.8

**John Marin (1870–1953)**

*Brooklyn Bridge*, 1911

Etching: sheet, 19 3/4 x 15; plate, 11 3/8 x 8 15/16

Purchase, with funds from the Print Committee 83.25

*The Woolworth Building State II*, 1913

Etching with drypoint: sheet, 16 13/16 x 14 1/16;  
plate, 12 7/8 x 10 3/8

Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.776

*Deer Isle, Maine*, 1923

Watercolor on paper, 17 x 13 3/4 (sight)

Purchase 31.589

(Downtown only)

*White Horses — Sea Movement Off Deer Isle, Maine*, 1926

Watercolor on paper, 15 1/4 x 19 3/4

Gift of an anonymous donor 54.61

**Alfred Maurer (1868–1932)**

*Still Life*, n.d.

Oil on composition board, 18 x 21 1/2

Gift of Charles Simon 61.17

**Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986)**

*Drawing No. 8*, 1915

Charcoal on paper mounted on cardboard, 24 1/4 x 18 7/8

Purchase, with funds from the Mr. and Mrs. Arthur G.

Altschul Purchase Fund 85.52

(Downtown only)

*Flower Abstraction*, 1924

Oil on canvas, 48 x 30

50th Anniversary gift of Sandra Payson 85.47

(Downtown only)

*Abstraction*, 1926

Oil on canvas, 30 x 18

Purchase 58.43

(Downtown only)

*Single Lily with Red*, 1928

Oil on wood, 12 x 6 1/4

Purchase 33.29

*Black and White*, 1930

Oil on canvas, 36 x 24

50th Anniversary Gift of Mr. and Mrs. R. Crosby Kemper  
81.9

(Champion only)

*The White Calico Flower*, 1931

Oil on canvas, 30 x 36

Purchase 32.26

(Champion only)

### **Man Ray (1890–1976)**

*Five Figures*, 1914

Oil on canvas, 36 x 32

Gift of Katherine Kuh 56.36

*Élevage de Poussiere (Dust Breeding)*, 1920

Gelatin silver print, 9 7/8 x 11 15/16

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;

Purchase, Photography in the Fine Art Gift, 1969

(Champion only)

*Metal Laboratory Objects*, 1922

Rayograph, 9 3/8 x 7

Purchase, with funds from the Simon Foundation, Inc.

72.130

*Contrasted Circular Forms with Pair of Optical Black Dots*,  
1923

Rayograph, 9 3/8 x 7 1/16

Purchase, with funds from the Simon Foundation, Inc.

72.131

*Untitled (Walnut and Lighter)*, 1929

Gelatin silver print, 11 3/8 x 8 15/16

Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York;

Gift of James Thrall Soby

(Downtown only)

### **Morton L. Schamberg (1881–1918)**

*Self-Portrait*, 1912

Platinum print, 8 3/16 x 6 1/4

Gift of Clair R. Reis 76.28

*Untitled (City Courtyards)*, 1916

Gelatin silver print, 9 x 6

International Museum of Photography

at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York

*Untitled (Mechanical Abstraction)*, 1916

Oil on composition board, 20 x 16

50th Anniversary Gift of Mrs. Jean Whitehill 86.5.2

### **Charles Sheeler (1883–1965)**

*Bucks County Barn*, 1915

Gelatin silver print, 9 7/8 x 7 15/16

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alan H. Temple 71.162

*New York*, 1920

Gelatin silver print, 9 11/16 x 7 11/16

International Museum of Photography

at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York

*Untitled*, 1922

Gelatin silver print, 8 x 10

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alan H. Temple 71.163

*Bucks County Barn*, 1923

Tempera and crayon on paper, 19 1/4 x 25 1/2 (sight)

Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.468

*Interior*, 1926

Oil on canvas, 33 x 22

Gift of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.344

### **Edward Steichen (1879–1973)**

*Trinity Church, New York*, 1907

Gelatin silver print, 18 15/16 x 14 3/4

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;

The Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1933

(Champion only)

*Untitled (Triumph of the Egg)*, 1921

Palladium print, 9 9/16 x 7 9/16

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Bequest of

Edward Steichen by direction of Joanna T. Steichen

and George Eastman House

*La Duchesse de Gramont*, 1924

Gelatin silver print, 13 3/4 x 10 3/4

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Bequest of

Edward Steichen by direction of Joanna T. Steichen

and George Eastman House

*Fortieth Street, New York*, 1925

Gelatin silver print, 16 1/2 x 13 1/4

Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York;

Gift of the photographer

(Downtown only)



*Lighters*, 1928

Gelatin silver print, 16 1/2 x 13 1/8

Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York;

Gift of the photographer

(Downtown only)

*Untitled (Dying Sunflower)*, n.d.

Gelatin silver print, 13 3/4 x 10 11/16

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Bequest of

Edward Steichen by direction of Joanna T. Steichen

and George Eastman House

### **Alfred Stieglitz (1864 –1946)**

*The Steerage*, 1907

Photogravure, 15 13/16 x 11 1/16

Gift of an anonymous donor 77.106

*Paul B. Haviland*, c. 1910

Waxed platinum print, 9 5/8 x 7 5/8

Collection of Harry H. Lunn, Jr.

*Georgia O'Keeffe: A Portrait*, 1918

Gelatin silver print, 9 7/16 x 7 5/8

National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.;

Alfred Stieglitz Collection

(Downtown only)

*Luncheon at Lake George*, 1920

Gelatin silver print, 3 3/16 x 4 5/16

Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, New York;

Gift of Mrs. Arthur Schwab (Edna Bryner '07)

(Downtown only)

*Claudia O'Keeffe*, 1922

Gelatin silver print, 6 15/16 x 9 1/8

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.;

Alfred Stieglitz Collection

(Downtown only)

*Katharine Dudley*, 1922

Gelatin silver print, 9 x 7 9/16

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.;

Alfred Stieglitz Collection

(Downtown only)

*Equivalent*, 1925

Gelatin silver print, 4 11/16 x 3 5/8

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.;

Alfred Stieglitz Collection

(Downtown only)

*Equivalent*, 1925

Gelatin silver print, 4 5/8 x 3 5/8

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.;

Alfred Stieglitz Collection

(Downtown only)

*Equivalent—1925*, 1925

Gelatin silver print, 4 5/8 x 3 9/16

The Art Museum, Princeton University;

Museum purchase, Fowler McCormick Fund

*Equivalent—1926*, 1926

Gelatin silver print, 4 5/8 x 3 5/8

The Art Museum, Princeton University;

Museum purchase, Fowler McCormick Fund

*From Room 303 (Intimate Gallery, 489 Park Avenue —  
New York, April)*, 1927

Gelatin silver print, 4 11/16 x 2 9/16

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.;

Alfred Stieglitz Collection

(Downtown only)

*From the Shelton, New York (Room 3003),  
Looking South East*, 1927

Gelatin silver print, 3 7/16 x 4 1/2

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.;

Alfred Stieglitz Collection

(Downtown only)

*The City at Night*, 1931

Gelatin silver print, 9 1/2 x 7 1/2

The Art Museum, Princeton University; Gift of Ansel Adams  
in honor of David Hunter McAlpin

### **Paul Strand (1890–1976)**

*New York (Wall Street)*, 1915, as published in  
*Camera Work*, October 1916

The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden  
Foundations; The Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Division  
of Art, Prints and Photographs

*Photograph (Bowls)*, 1916, as published in  
*Camera Work*, June 1917  
The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden  
Foundations; The Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Division  
of Art, Prints and Photographs

*Photograph (Blind)*, 1917, as published in  
*Camera Work*, June 1917  
The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden  
Foundations; The Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Division  
of Art, Prints and Photographs

*The Apartment House*, 1920  
Gelatin silver print, 9 3/8 x 7 3/4  
Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York;  
Gift of the photographer  
(Downtown only)

*Drilling Machine*, 1923  
Gelatin silver print, 9 1/2 x 7 1/2  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Gift of Cray Research

*Driftwood, Dark Roots, Maine*, 1928  
Platinum print, 7 9/16 x 9 1/2  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; The William Hill  
Dunwoody Fund

*Alfred Stieglitz, Lake George, New York*, 1929  
(printed in 1984 by Richard Benson)  
Gelatin silver print, 6 9/16 x 7 3/8  
The Art Museum, Princeton University;  
Museum purchase, gift of Mrs. Max Adler,  
David Hunter McAlpin, and William J. Salman

*Window, Red River, New Mexico*, 1931  
Platinum print, 9 11/16 x 7 5/8  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; The William Hill  
Dunwoody Fund

#### **Karl Struss (1886–1981)**

*On the East River, New York*, 1912, as published in  
*Camera Work*, April 1912  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Gift of Julia Marshall

#### **Abraham Walkowitz (1880–1965)**

*Cityscape*, c. 1915  
Oil on canvas, 25 x 18  
Purchase, with funds from Philip Morris Inc. 76.11

*New York*, 1917  
Watercolor, ink, and graphite on paper,  
30 5/8 x 21 3/4 (sight)  
Gift of the artist in memory of Juliana Force 51.35

#### **Max Weber (1881–1961)**

*Figure Number 1*, 1917  
Color woodcut: sheet, 13 x 9 1/2; image, 10 x 3 1/8  
Gift of the artist 46.16

*Figure Number 2*, 1917  
Color woodcut: sheet, 7 5/8 x 5 1/2; image, 4 1/2 x 2 5/16  
Gift of the artist 46.17

*Figure Number 3*, 1919–20  
Color woodcut: sheet, 9 1/4 x 6 9/16; image, 4 1/4 x 2  
Gift of the artist 46.18

*Gaillardias*, 1933  
Oil on canvas, 38 1/4 x 17  
Purchase 34.27  
(Champion only)

#### **Clarence H. White (1871–1925)**

*Drops of Rain*, 1908, as published in  
*Camera Work*, July 1908  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts;  
Gift of Julia Marshall

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